United Nations E/1999/103

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
2 July 1999

Original: English

Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5–30 July 1999
Agenda item 7
Coordination, programme and other questions

Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/4, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith to the Council, for its consideration, the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti.

99-19835 (E) 130799

Report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

Contents

		Paragraphs	Page
I.	Introduction	1–10	3
II.	General economic and national context	11–18	4
III.	Role of the United Nations system	19–23	5
IV.	Adequacy, coherence, effectiveness and coordination of the international community's assistance to Haiti	24–42	6
	A. Adequacy of assistance	24–25	6
	B. Coherence of assistance	26–27	6
	C. Effectiveness of assistance	28–29	6
	D. Coordination of assistance	30–42	7
V.	Supplementary observations	43–46	9
VI.	Recommendations	47–59	10
	A. Need for a long-term programme of support for Haiti	47–50	10
	B. Need for national stability	51–53	10
	C. Need for a secure domestic environment	54–57	11
	D. Need for a synthesis report on United Nations activities in Haiti	58–59	11

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 1999/4 of 7 May 1999, the Economic and Social Council decided to create an Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti to submit recommendations to the Council, at its substantive session of 1999, on how to ensure that the assistance of the international community in supporting the Government of Haiti to achieve sustainable development is adequate, coherent, well coordinated and effective.

2. In the same resolution, the Council decided that the Ad Hoc Advisory Group was to be composed of five Council members designated by the President of the Council on the basis of equitable geographical distribution and in consultation with regional groups and the Government of Haiti. Following those consultations, the Council approved the members of the Advisory Group as follows:

Makarim Wibisono (Indonesia), Asian Group (Chairman of the Advisory Group)

Janis Priedkalns (Latvia), Eastern European Group

Anund Briyay Neewoor (Mauritius), African Group

Gelson Fonseca Jr. (Brazil), Latin American and Caribbean Group

Michel Dubal (Canada), Western European and other States Group

At some of the meetings of the Advisory Group, Mr. Fonseca was represented by Enio Cordeiro, Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations.

3. Haitian authorities were consulted by the Advisory Group at all stages in the preparation of the present report. In accordance with Council resolution 1999/4, operative paragraph 2, the Advisory Group sought to maintain a constant dialogue with the official representatives of Haiti and to involve them in all its activities.

4. The first meeting of the Advisory Group was convened on Thursday, 13 May 1999. The Chairman of the Advisory Group, Makarim Wibisono, convened and chaired a series of meetings and briefing sessions aimed at gathering information from various sources and for considering the most appropriate way for the Council to contribute to the ongoing efforts towards promoting sustainable development in Haiti.

5. On 28 May 1999, the Group held its first briefing with officials from the World Bank; the United Nations Development Programme; and the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat.

6. A meeting was held on 7 June 1999 with the following representatives of the United Nations in Haiti: Julian Harston, representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti and head of the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH), Colin Granderson, executive head of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH), a joint Organization of American States (OAS)/United Nations mission, and Oscar Fernández-Taranco, United Nations resident coordinator in Haiti and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resident representative as well as deputy representative of the Secretary-General.

7. On 15 July 1999, the Chairman of the Advisory Group convened a working lunch for its members, together with representatives of "Friends of Haiti" group of countries, namely Argentina, Canada, Chile, France, the United States of America and Venezuela. The discussions involved an exchange of views on the developments in Haiti and the future of the United Nations presence in that country.

8. Following an invitation of the World Bank, which is mandated to coordinate donor assistance to Haiti, the Advisory Group went to Washington, D.C., on 18 June 1999 to take part in an informal Haiti donors meeting. The meeting, organized by the Bank, consisted of a series of presentations by the various stakeholders of development assistance, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the European Union, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). A UNDP representative also attended.

9. From 27 to 29 June 1999, the Advisory Group paid a visit to Haiti, organized by the office of the representative of the Secretary-General, with the help of the Haitian Government. The visit included:

(a) A meeting with the President of Haiti, René Préval; a working session with the Prime Minister, Jacques Edouard Alexis, and Fred Joseph, Minister of the Economy and Finance; and working sessions with the Secretary of State for Public Security, Robert Manuel, as well as other authorities in Haiti;

(b) Meetings with the Haitian political leaders and members of a broad spectrum of civil society;

(c) Meetings with the "Friends of Haiti" group of countries;

(d) Heads of the United Nations agencies involved in Haiti.

10. The Advisory Group wishes to express its deep gratitude to all the entities at the multilateral and bilateral levels involved in assisting Haiti in completing its task, in particular the World Bank, the office of the representative of the Secretary-General in Haiti, and the office of the resident coordinator in Haiti. The latter, besides providing a continuos and multifaceted help, prepared a brief which constituted an important input for the present report. The Advisory Group also wishes to thank the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for its unstinting support.

II. General economic and national context

11. As noted in the last report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the situation in Haiti (S/1999/579), the country has been slowly recovering from its most recent political crisis since April 1997. In March 1999, a new Prime Minister was appointed, and in April 1999 a new transitional Government was formed. A new Provisional Electoral Council has also been created, and has started work on preparations for legislative and local elections, which are expected to take place by December 1999, with a new Parliament scheduled to be in place by 11 January 2000. Legislative elections will be followed by Presidential elections, which are planned for November 2000.

12. The Secretary-General has characterized as encouraging the steps taken so far by the Haitian political leadership in its efforts to resolve the protracted political crisis through elections, and has called on all Haitian political leaders to participate constructively in the electoral process to ensure its success. In recognition of the fact that the forthcoming legislative and local elections are the only viable way to resolve the present crisis, the transition Government, in its recently issued plan of action, announced plans to work closely with the Provisional Electoral Council to ensure free, fair and transparent elections, and to seek to revive the interest in participation of the Haitian population in the democratization process. For their part, the donor community and the United Nations system have pledged to actively support the electoral process through direct financial, logistical and technical support, on the provision that the Government takes adequate measures to ensure security and transparency. This support is being provided in conjunction with the role of political facilitation being played by the "Friends of Haiti" Group of Ambassadors, the representative of the Secretary-General, and a number of personalities, including the former President of Costa Rica, Oscar Arias.

13. Haiti continues to be a least developed country, the only one in the western hemisphere. Its indicators on situational development compare poorly at both regional and interregional levels. Haiti's annual per capita income of US$ 250 is significantly below the average of US$ 3,320 for Latin America and the Caribbean region. Based on its assessment in March 1998 of poverty in Haiti, the World Bank estimates that about 80 per cent of the approximately two thirds of the population that live in the rural areas are poor, with about two thirds of those considered to be extremely poor. In addition to the low gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, Haiti also has serious wealth distribution issues to address. It is estimated that about 4 per cent of the population own 66 per cent of the country's entire resources, 16 per cent own 14 per cent, 70 per cent own barely 20 per cent, while 10 per cent of the population is considered to be entirely destitute.

14. Despite these negative social indicators, trends in overall economic performance since the return from exile of the constitutional Government in 1994 show some positive achievements. The latest IMF economic performance review mission conducted in March 1999 highlighted some of these achievements.

15. The current IMF-monitored economic programme put in place in November 1998 as a follow-up to the 1997/98 programme is designed to maintain macroeconomic stability and make further progress in the area of structural reform while the political situation settles, and while a possible new enhanced structural adjustment facility programme is being considered. The 1998/99 programme was formulated taking into consideration the negative effects of hurricane Georges. It aims to promote output growth, contain inflation and central government budget deficits, strengthen international reserves and continue support for structural reforms in the public enterprise sector. The programme also takes into account and endorses donor-supported sectoral policies to improve efficiency in the areas of education, health, justice, infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance.

16. These relatively positive trends must however be viewed within the framework of enormous development challenges, particularly the need to combat extreme mass poverty while uniting the country around a shared, positive and long-term vision of its future. This challenge is compounded by the protracted political crisis that has further eroded the authority of the State and its already diminished capacity to deliver basic social services to the population. At another level, the challenge is that of managing the development process to ensure that immediate national and international actions to alleviate extreme and massive

poverty do not lose sight of the need to build strong national governance institutions in the medium and long term.

17. Beyond the fundamental requirement to reinstate and significantly improve upon the basic functions of the State and the institutions of government, the World Bank poverty assessment report (1998) also recommended a number of measures that would need to be taken to ensure sustainable economic and social development in Haiti. These include (a) strengthening macroeconomic stability and reducing distortions so as to encourage private sector investment; (b) improving the quality of government spending in order to invest in basic social services and raise the level of human capital; and (c) rationalizing the assistance provided by external donors.

18. The mandate of the newly formed transitional Government, installed in April 1999, is limited to facilitating the organization of the upcoming general elections and identifying short- and medium-term priorities that a subsequent government could start to address on a more sustainable basis. Given the present situation in which the Government is called upon to operate, its actions at the time can only be of a short-term nature, with its first priority being given to organizing free and fair elections as soon as possible to help guarantee institutional stability. Its action in the above-mentioned sectors will thus consist of short-term projects and policy reflections to identify viable approaches for subsequent governments.

III. Role of the United Nations system

19. The United Nations system in Haiti is made up of:

(a) Two missions, MIPONUH, in charge of the civilian police, and MICIVIH, a human rights observation mission. These missions report through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs, respectively, to the Security Council and the General Assembly;

(b) Seven agencies (UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization), who report through their respective governing bodies and the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly;

(c) The Bretton Woods institutions (World Bank and IMF).

In addition, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is permanently associated with all United Nations system activities in Haiti.

20. Unlike the bilateral and other multilateral institutions represented in Haiti, the United Nations agencies have a degree of flexibility that has enable d them to work closely with both the Government and NGOs in assisting the population at the grass-roots level, both during and after the embargo that followed the 1991 military coup. The areas of assistance include the following:

(a) Good governance, including support to the democratization process, police mentoring, judicial system reform, human rights, state modernization and reforms, decentralization, participatory local governance and electoral support;

(b) Universal health care, including the fight against human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and population issues;

(c) Disaster prevention, preparedness and management;

(d) Promoting productive employment;

(e) Basic education for all;

(f) Protection and restoration of the environment;

(g) Food security;

(h) Cultural development and tourism;

(i) Culture of peace and migration;

(j) Support for coordination mechanisms of Governments, donors, and the United Nations system.

21. Excluding the World Bank and IMF, the United Nations system's disbursements in Haiti in support of socio-economic development objectives stand at US$ 127.8 million since the return of the constitutional Government. During this period, UNDP has been the largest United Nations system donor, with US$ 54 million disbursed between 1995 and 1998. Since 1998, however, UNDP disbursements have greatly diminished, due in part to an overall drop in UNDP resources at the central level. Other important United Nations system donors include WFP, WHO and UNICEF, with disbursements of more than US$ 10 million each between 1995 and 1998.

22. At a meeting held in April 1999 chaired by the resident coordinator, who also acts as the UNDP resident representative and deputy representative of the Secretary-General, it was agreed that progress achieved in the field of inter-agency coordination be further consolidated through the preparation of a common country assessment by the end

of 1999. This is a key step under the Secretary-General's reform programme as it will lead to the formulation of a United Nations development assistance framework in 2000, as well as harmonized programming cycles by 2002. It should also complement the World Bank's country development framework. Thanks to the common country assessment, the United Nations agencies will have the elements necessary to define a long-term United Nations development assistance programme for Haiti, and to further harmonize and integrate their operations.

23. In response to the more urgent requirements for disaster preparedness, regular meetings of the disaster management team have been held in order to prepare for the hurricane season. In 1999, such activities by the United Nations system in Haiti will benefit from a newly approved UNDP-financed technical assistance project, which in collaboration with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs will reinforce the capacity of the Haitian authorities to prevent and manage disasters.

IV. Adequacy, coherence, effectiveness and coordination of the international community's assistance to Haiti

A. Adequacy of assistance

24. The international community, including the United Nations system, responded to the return of the constitutional Government from exile at the end of 1994 with a resumption of official development assistance, beginning in 1995. The total volume of aid, however, has been dropping quite significantly. Ongoing programmes are currently limited to levels formulated and approved before the June 1997 electoral controversy and subsequent resignation of the Government. As shown in table 1, total bilateral and multilateral assistance to Haiti has dropped by about 35 per cent between 1995 and 1998. Far from signifying a deliberate decision by donors to reduce aid to Haiti, this drop is directly linked to absorptive capacity constraints and non-approval of available loans by the Haitian Parliament. As of December 1998, IDB and the World Bank alone has a combined total of over US$ 570 million worth of new programmes and projects awaiting approval by the Haitian Parliament or finalization by the formulation missions. As a result of the discords between the executive and legislative branches, these new programmes have still not been approved and will not be until a new parliament is in place. Many other partners are in a similar situation, which has had a very negative impact on the rate of resource flows to Haiti. It is hoped that the upcoming elections will provide the institutional framework required to ensure that aid flows to Haiti can again become adequate.

25. Although Haiti's foreign assistance needs are enormous, it should be said that despite this significant drop, Haiti is still a major recipient of development assistance, with a per capita aid of $74 in 1995, $57 in 1996 and $47 in 1997, compared to an average $12 per capita for the developing world at large.

B. Coherence of assistance

26. On the whole, it can be said that external assistance to Haiti since the return of the constitutional Government has sought to respond to national development needs identified by the Government and the international community. The framework within which most of these needs were identified at the time was the emergency recovery programme to which donors pledged funds. So far, the areas of concentration of foreign assistance have addressed the priority areas contained in this programme, as well as in other jointly formulated bilateral and multilateral programmes. However, the aid policies of some partners have required them to work directly at the grass-roots level, using international NGOs as executing agents. While this approach has helped achieve significant results at this level, it has not helped the Government's efforts to improve upon its coordination role and enhance overall coherence of development assistance.

27. To harmonize its programming cycles starting, beginning in 2002, in line with ongoing United Nations reform objectives, the United Nations system aims, through its resident coordinator mechanism, to support national efforts to ensure greater coherence of external assistance. As indicated above, the planned common country assessment will also constitute an important input to these efforts.

C. Effectiveness of assistance

28. Although no formal evaluation has been made of the impact of aid to Haiti over the past five years, it is clear that substantial foreign assistance has made a significant contribution to the functioning of the Government. This was a period that followed three years of centralized authority from 1991 to 1994, during which official foreign aid disbursements were suspended and economic activity slowed down considerably. A major problem facing the delivery of

foreign assistance is that of insufficient coordination by the Government and slow disbursements due to diminishing absorptive capacity.

29. Another factor affecting the effectiveness of aid to Haiti is the concentration of donor resources on humanitarian activities. There is now a need to shift it towards support for sustainable development objectives, including capacity-building and institution-building. Given the present evolution of Haiti's development needs, it is important to focus more on building capacities for measuring both the impact of aid on the country and the impact of specific national and donor-sponsored programmes on the overall development situation. To this end, the United Nations system in Haiti, under the leadership of the resident coordinator, has launched a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening the country's capacity to produce socio-economic statistics that are vital for monitoring its development progress. In addition to the internal harmonization of approaches referred to above, the United Nations system is also about to launch a 20/20 initiative[1] for Haiti aimed at encouraging increased government and donor attention to the social sectors. By focusing aid and national resources on these sectors, it will be possible to target the most needy sections of the population.

D. Coordination of assistance

Coordination by the Government

30. Strengthening the leadership role of the Government in aid coordination is key to making Haiti's cooperation with its international development partners more effective. Decades of institutional instability have adversely affected the coordination capacities of the Government accumulated in previous years. The situation steadily further worsened following the 1991 military coup, when the constitutional Government went into exile and the void in development was filled by international donors and NGOs. Since the return of the constitutional Government in October 1994, the institutions officially charged with aid coordination have found it increasingly difficult to effectively coordinate the activities of most external partners. This is partly due to donor-driven initiatives and the fact that many of these partners, including some non-governmental organizations, have not yet shed the isolated operational practices adopted during the embargo years.

31. Since the return of the constitutional Government, the implementation of donor-financed projects at the operational level has been the responsibility of two special government agencies, namely the Unité centrale de gestion and the Fonds d'assistance économique et sociale. These were set up to facilitate project implementation under emergency circumstances. Each of these entities has a Board of Directors, including representatives of the Ministry, other government agencies and NGOs. The Office of the President has also received and managed donor project support, and has been involved in monitoring the implementation of a variety of urban infrastructure projects. An implementation unit tracks the progress of these and other donor-supported efforts.

32. Starting from 1995, project/donor coordination units were set up in each sectoral ministry, with funding from the European Union and other partners. This reflected a policy, subsequently confirmed by the Government in 1996, to give sectoral ministries responsibility for managing and coordinating donor contributions to their respective sectors. The purpose of these units was to ensure that project duplication was eliminated, and that procedural and reporting requirements were more easily and promptly met. In this way, the technical units of the ministries concerned were freed to address the technical aspects of the programmes involved. A World Bank consultative group-related assessment of these units in 1997 found their track record to be mixed. At least two ministries had instituted a donor coordination unit that was attempting to harmonize existing projects by bringing donors together, identifying programme gaps and seeking new project funding on the basis of an ongoing strategic planning process. The major problems facing these units involved communication with donors, government administrative procedures, donor-imposed procedures at the project identification level, design and implementation stages, and the lack of adequate information regarding ongoing and planned projects.

33. The Government recognizes the importance of effective donor coordination, and has recently launched a number of initiatives to strengthen its leadership in this area. With the support of UNDP and other donors, a number of workshops on coordination and decentralized planning have been organized to help clarify its policies and expectations in this area. In the newly issued plan of action of the Government, the Office of the Prime Minister plans to formulate new policies in a number of areas, including international cooperation and human resource development, in order to help it accomplish its coordination functions. Emphasis will be placed on the creation of effective information flows, documentation systems, and the harmonization of management and coordination procedures through the elaboration of a procedures manual.

Coordination within the donor community

34. The consultative group process facilitated by the World Bank remains the framework for inter-donor coordination and for donor-government consultations on development priorities and policies, as well as on issues of funding. The first formal consultative group meeting on Haiti took place in Paris in January 1995, at which over US$ 1 billion were pledged by the donor community. A second meeting was held in April 1997, at which, among other things, consensus was reached on the critical components of a comprehensive poverty alleviation strategy. A message was also sent to the Haitian Parliament to advance legislative action required to ensure that the population benefit from the reform programme. The major sectors covered during these meetings included agriculture, education, the environment, health, justice reform, roads and transportation, water and sanitation, governance and poverty alleviation.

35. The political crisis has hampered formal follow-up of the sectoral issues raised during these consultative group meetings. Given this situation, donors have been undertaking informal consultations among themselves through monthly meetings in Haiti. These meetings were attended by the donor community and the United Nations system agencies. More formal meetings were convened on an ad hoc basis by the World Bank in Washington, D.C., and informal working groups have been created in the areas of justice reform, environmental protection, health, agriculture and rural development, education and support for the police. The purpose of these consultations has been to enable donors identify areas of complementarity and avoid duplication among their programmes, as well as to maintain dialogue and to harmonize their views and approaches on aid policy issues.

36. Through these consultation mechanisms, the donor community and the United Nations have succeeded in maintaining development policy dialogue while efforts continue at the political level to resolve the crisis. it has also been possible to pursue donor-funded programmes approved prior to the current crisis, thus enabling the population to continue to benefit from vital development support. The most recent donor meeting, held in Washington, D.C., in March 1999, reviewed progress in all these sectors and resolved to pursue and strengthen related consultations. Given its transitional nature, the newly installed Government has not sought a formal consultation group meeting. The implications, once again, are that all long-term policy dialogue between the Haitian authorities and its major development partners will have to wait till governmental institutions are renewed through the upcoming elections.

Coordination within the United Nations system

37. While MIPONUH and MICIVIH are responsible for the police mentoring and human rights observation programmes respectively, the rest of the United Nations system, under the leadership of the resident coordinator, is actively engaged in socio-economic development activities in the relevant sectors of the different agencies. Since the beginning of 1998, very important progress has been made in the areas of United Nations coordination. In his last report (November 1998) on MIPONUH, the Secretary-General noted that Haiti offers an excellent example of the way the different United Nations organizations can work together efficiently.

38. Following a first coordination workshop held in May 1998, seven thematic working groups were established in mid-1998, addressing the issues of population and environment, gender equity, food security, local governance, health, education and productive employment. The mandate of these groups was to: (a) undertake situation analyses in each of the sectors identified; (b) assess ongoing United Nations activities; and (c) make recommendations for improved coordination. An eighth working group was also established for common services. The groups presented their findings and recommendations during a second inter-agency coordination workshop held in November 1998. The main recommendations were: (a) to proceed rapidly with the formulation and implementation of concrete joint actions; (b) to focus United Nations assistance on national priorities identified by the working groups in consultation with the Haitian Government and in areas where the United Nations system has clear comparative advantages; and (c) start preparations to undertake a common country assessment that would pave the way for long-term programming of United Nations assistance to Haiti.

39. The terms of reference for the common country assessment working group are being finalized. The target date for its finalization has been set for December 1999, and it will take into account the recently published action plan of the Government. Responsibilities have been assigned to agencies concerning (a) the collection of necessary data and information and for the completion of the common country assessment indicator framework (see table 1); and (b) the preparation of a status report on the major conventions, declarations and international conferences (see table 2). A preliminary list of common country assessment themes has been established, and their respective focal points and three cross-cutting themes (gender equity, human rights and poverty) have also been identified. The division of labour

among the agencies with regard to data collection and analyses in the different thematic areas is described in table 2.

40. As has already been noted, in compliance with General Assembly resolutions, the agencies of the United Nations development group in Haiti (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP) have pursued their efforts towards the harmonization of their respective programme cycles by the year 2002. This will have been preceded, in 2001, with the formulation of a United Nations development assistance framework for Haiti.

United Nations representation in Haiti

41. In order to ensure the smooth integration of United Nations development system activities with the United Nations political and peacekeeping role in Haiti, the UNDP resident representative, in addition to being resident coordinator of the United Nations development system, is also deputy representative of the Secretary-General and deputy head of MIPONUH.

42. The unique combination has enabled:

(a) Close complementarity between MIPONUH and UNDP, in particular with regard to:

(i) Coordinated assistance provided to the Haitian National Police;

(ii) Assistance with the electoral process, where both the representative of the Secretary-General and UNDP play a key coordination role, respectively, on the political and technical sides;

(iii) Assistance in the resolution of the institutional crisis and facilitating the reconciliation process;

(b) Direct continuous reporting to the United Nations, including through the quarterly reports of the representative of the Secretary-General to the Secretary-General, on the United Nations system development activities and progress made in terms of United Nations coordination and implementation of the Secretary-General's reform programme.

V. Supplementary observations

43. Much has yet to be done in order to ensure that ongoing and future international assistance in support of the Government of Haiti for achieving sustainable development continues to be adequate and coherent, and that the main problems related to the coordination and effectiveness of the assistance are addressed. As has been reported, capacity-building is of paramount importance and a critical objective for assisting Haiti in all sectors. This would enable both the Haitian Government and civil society to effectively coordinate and absorb international economic cooperation.

44. Given that about 86 per cent of development investments in Haiti are funded from external resources, it is vital that the flow of such resources to the country is not only maintained but is also increased over the next few years, as the country seeks to strengthen its institutions and to accelerate its economic and social development. At the same time, however, the Government will have to address the weakest link in the development aid chain, that of inadequate aid management and coordination. Unfortunately, capacity-building within those national institutions that have a mandate for aid coordination is being hampered by the political stalemate, which has made it difficult to approve new technical cooperation projects, some of which would have strengthened managerial and coordination capacity. The first step towards reinstating institutional stability and ensuring that the Government effectively plays its leadership role in formulating and implementing development policy is through holding the forthcoming elections to renew Parliament and local council assemblies and enable a new government to be formed.

45. The consultative group led by the World Bank constitutes the formal aid coordination mechanism among the bilateral donor community, and between the donors and the Haitian Government. Despite the willingness of the donors to strengthen and support this process, a formal consultative group meeting to address long-term development objectives with Haiti's partners will not be possible before a new Parliament is elected. In the meantime, the donor community and the United Nations system have instituted informal coordination and consultation mechanisms that have already succeeded in minimizing duplications and in developing synergies within their programmes. These include working groups and regular donor meetings within Haiti and in Washington, D.C.

46. It is recognized that there is a vital link between national stability and economic and social development, and that the provision of adequate and sufficient assistance to Haiti is largely subject to a return to political stability. It is therefore of the utmost importance that all political forces support the forthcoming elections and agree on appropriate modalities for the full participation of the people.

VI. Recommendations

A. Need for a long-term programme of support for Haiti

47. There is a recognized need to develop, in collaboration with the "Friends of Haiti" group of countries and other donors, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, a strategic framework and comprehensive approach for a long-term United Nations programme of support for Haiti to cover such areas as education, peace-building, poverty eradication, durable recovery and sustainable development. The Government of Haiti must take a leading role in defining the objectives and priorities of this long-term strategy and programme of support, in accordance with paragraph 17 of Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1998/1.

48. Concerted efforts have been deployed by the agencies of the United Nations system engaged in assisting Haiti through the resident coordinator mechanism, as well as by the other multilateral and bilateral donors who have coordinated their actions and contributions through the consultative group led by the World Bank, in consultation with the Haitian authorities.

49. However, there is a great need for capacity-building and strengthening the leadership role of the Government of Haiti in providing orientation and coordination for all development activities, including the coordination of aid at the recipient end, the development of absorptive capacity and the promotion and creation of employment. Capacity-building has proven to be a critical factor for enabling Governments and civil society to manage their own affairs and effectively absorb international cooperation in post-crisis situations.

50. The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti recommends that:

(a) The Council request the Secretary-General to establish, in consultation with the Government of Haiti and making use of the existing United Nations presence in Haiti, the necessary mechanisms to develop a long-term strategy and programme of support for Haiti in such areas as education, peace-building, poverty eradication, durable recovery and sustainable development, aimed particularly at reinforcing capacity-building objectives both in governmental and civil society institutions;

(b) The United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, other multilateral institutions and regional organizations, bilateral donors, including within the consultative group meetings led by the World Bank, and non-governmental organizations continue to support and to work in very close collaboration with the Haitian Government and the rest of the donor community for the purpose of elaborating and supporting the long-term strategy and programme for Haiti, including prioritizing sustainable development and capacity-building objectives;

(c) The coordination of the work of the agencies of the United Nations system in Haiti continue to function through the resident coordinator mechanism since it has proven to be a very adequate means for effective coordination. Such coordination should be further strengthened through the completion of the common country assessment and subsequent preparation of a United Nations development assistance framework for Haiti, which will provide the elements to define an effective long-term United Nations development assistance programme for the country. UNDP should provide increased financial and technical resources to this mechanism in order to further strengthen it;

(d) The long-term development programme of support for Haiti address the issues of capacity-building of governmental institutions, especially in such areas as governance, the promotion of human rights, the administration of justice, the electoral system, law enforcement, police training, and other areas of social and economic development, which are critical for enabling the Haitian Government to adequately and effectively coordinate, manage, absorb and utilize international assistance and development aid;

(e) The long-term strategy and programme of support for Haiti also address the issue of capacity-building in civil society institutions.

B. Need for national stability

51. The Group emphasized that there is a vital link between national stability and economic and social development. In addition, in the case of Haiti, certain multilateral and bilateral aid flows have been put on hold until the new parliamentary and governmental authorities are constituted through the forthcoming elections.

52. The Government of Haiti has requested international electoral assistance for its plans to organize and hold these legislative, local and presidential elections.

53. The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti recommends that:

(a) The Council urge the United Nations system to continue to support the preparations for legislative, local and presidential elections in Haiti, including contributing funds to the ongoing efforts of the Haitian Government to organize these elections;

(b) The Council invite the General Assembly to renew the mandate of the International Civilian Mission in Haiti (MICIVIH), taking into account the need to review the mandate to reflect the challenges of the next two years;

(c) The Council request the Secretary-General to coordinate with the Government of Haiti other modalities under which reinforced support from the international community can be ensured for the electoral processes.

C. Need for a secure domestic environment

54. Recognition has been made of the importance of a peaceful, secure and stable environment as a precondition for free and fair elections and of its link with sustainable development efforts.

55. Similarly, recognition has been made of the importance of a professional, self-sustaining, fully functioning national police for the consolidation of democracy and the revitalization of Haiti's system of justice, and for the maintenance of a secure and stable environment necessary for the conduct of development and democratic activities.

56. The United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH) has been active in the area of police training programmes and MICIVIH has been active in promoting human rights.

57. The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti recommends that:

(a) The Council urge the United Nations system to continue to work in the areas of consolidation of democracy, training and professionalization of the national police force of Haiti, and to that end invite the General Assembly to consider devising a United Nations special training and technical assistance programme for the Haitian National Police;

(b) The Council invite the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to continue his good offices in Haiti through his representative and to maintain the existence of the political office there headed by him, which would also have the responsibility of managing any new civilian mission mandated by the United Nations.

D. Need for a synthesis report on United Nations activities in Haiti

58. A periodic synthesis report on United Nations system activities in Haiti is needed so as to enable the members of the Council to closely follow developments in Haiti.

59. The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti recommends that:

(a) The Council request the Secretary-General to submit an integrated annual synthesis report on the elaboration and implementation of the long-term programme of support for Haiti, including observations and recommendations on the work of the relevant United Nations bodies in their respective areas of competence;

(b) In preparing that report, due account be taken of the Haitian Government's development plans and programmes for the country, as well as of the United Nations system common country assessment for Haiti and, when completed, the United Nations development assistance framework for Haiti;

(c) Similarly, in preparing that report, due attention be paid to a systematic evaluation of the impact of the various programmes of assistance to Haiti with a view to enhancing their overall effectiveness.

Notes

[1] The 20/20 initiative, launched at the World Summit for Social Development, suggests that interested developed and developing countries partners agree on mutual commitments to allocate, on average, 20 per cent of official development assistance and 20 per cent of the national budget respectively to basic social programmes.

Table 1
Volume and main sources of aid, 1995–1998
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Sources	*1995*	*%*	*1996*	*%*	*1997*	*%*	*1998*	*%*
United States	100 179	18.7	48 780	11.5	85 625	24.4	94 564	26.8
Canada	44 263	8.3	28 621	6.8	32 535	9.3	30 241	8.6
France	52 859	9.9	23 815	5.6	25 146	7.2	17 762	5.1
Japan	31 548	5.9	15 798	3.7	5 979	1.7	8 336	2.4
Taiwan Province of China	31 260	5.9	8 642	2.0	12 000	3.4	4 400	1.2
Other bilateral aid	4 447	0.8	19 860	4.8	12 223	3.4	15 356	4.3
Total bilateral	264 556	49.5	145 516	34.4	173 508	49.4	170 659	48.4
Multilateral sources								
IDB	87 855	16.4	49 777	11.8	57 362	16.3	68 565	19.4
World Bank	67 451	12.6	66 219	15.6	39 366	11.2	28 752	8.1
IMF	25 774	4.8	22 486	5.3	551	0.2	828	0.2
European Union	55 344	10.4	92 384	21.8	39 197	11.2	55 439	15.7
Other multilateral	923	0.2	77	0.0	1 953	0.5	990	0.3
UNDP	12 858	2.4	16 855	4.0	16 948	4.8	8 153	2.3
Other United Nations system	16 816	3.1	21 611	5.1	14 523	4.2	19 966	5.6
Total multilateral aid	267 021	49.9	269 409	63.6	169 900	48.4	182 693	51.6
Assistance from NGOs	2 868	0.5	8 449	2.0	7 830	2.2	NA	
Total external aid	534 445	100.0	423 374	100.0	351 238	100.0	353 352	100.0

Source: UNDP, 1997 *Development Cooperation Report* and preliminary data for 1998.

Sectoral concentration: Balance of payment disbursements made up the largest share (29.8 per cent) of total disbursements for the 1995–1997 period, followed by governance (13.7 per cent), humanitarian assistance (8.5 per cent), transport (7.08 per cent), health (6.5 per cent), water and urban infrastructure (6.2 per cent) and agriculture (5.3 per cent). Together, health and education account for only 14.65 per cent of total disbursements and the environment for 1.1 percent; 70 percent of these disbursements were grants while 30 per cent were loans. External aid financed approximately 86 percent of all public investment in Haiti during this period. Preliminary disbursement figures for 1998 show a different configuration of sectoral priorities, with education and health accounting for 18 percent, at the same level as humanitarian assistance, transport receiving 12 percent, and agriculture, social development and governance each accounting for 8 per cent of total disbursements for the year. These variations are indicative of the shifting priorities and trends in Haiti's development needs.

Table 2
Thematic areas: responsible agencies

Thematic area	*Responsible agency*
Economic context	World Bank/IMF/UNDP
Governance (including the democratization process/ consolidation of the rule of law)	UNDP/World Bank
Human rights	MICIVIH/UNICEF
Employment	UNDP/ILO
Population	UNFPA
Rural development/food security	FAO/WFP
Education	UNESCO
Health	WHO/PAHO
HIV/AIDS	UNAIDS/UNFPA
Environment	UNDP
Culture/culture of peace	UNESCO
Migration	IOM

UNITED NATIONS **E S**

Economic and Social Council
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1999/104
S/1999/754
6 July 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5-30 July 1999
Agenda item 4
COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING THEME: DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA: IMPLEMENTATION AND COORDINATED FOLLOW-UP BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM OF INITIATIVES ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-fourth year

Letter dated 1 July 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the Blueprint for a United States-Africa Partnership for the Twenty-first Century that came out of the first United States-Africa Ministerial (see annex),* an agreement between the United States and 46 sub-Saharan African nations to foster greater economic development, trade, investment, political reform and mutual economic growth, held in Washington, D.C., from 15 to 18 March 1999.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Economic and Social Council, under agenda item 4, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. Peter BURLEIGH
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* The annex is being circulated in the language of submission only.

Annex

Blueprint for a United States-Africa Partnership for the Twenty-first Century, Washington, D.C., 18 March 1999

Eighty-three Ministers from forty-six sub-Saharan African nations, representatives from four North African nations, and the heads of eight African regional organizations met with President Clinton, eight members of the U.S. Cabinet, four agency heads, and other senior U.S. officials in Washington, D.C., March 15-18, 1999, to consider the future of the U.S.-Africa Partnership in the 21st Century. At this historic, unprecedented and productive gathering, we identified opportunities for enhanced cooperation as well as important issues to address collectively through our new Partnership.

We intend to work together on the major issues connecting sub-Saharan Africa and the United States. Given the Ministerial nature of these meetings, our dialogue focused on governmental actions. Yet we also took heed of the critical roles that the private sector and civil society can and must play in our countries and in our Partnership. We thus used the occasion to network with business and NGO representatives. Additionally, African participants found meetings with the U.S. Congress to be constructive and informative.

COMMON PERSPECTIVES

U.S. and African Ministers share the conviction that the acceleration of Africa's integration into the global economy is in our mutual interest and will benefit the people of both the United States and Africa. They recognize that each side of the Partnership has much to offer the other. The United States has capital, technology, strong experience in international trade and investment, and the world's richest and most open market. Africa has abundant natural resources and talented, hard-working people who are nearly three times more numerous than the population of the United States. Many sub-Saharan African nations have reformed their economies in the 1990s, liberalizing trade and investment regimes and moving toward a greater reliance on the private sector. These economies performed significantly better than in the previous two decades.

African-U.S. economic ties continue to grow. For example, U.S. exports to Africa grew more rapidly in 1998 than did U.S exports to most other regions and are now 45% greater than its exports to all countries of the former Soviet Union combined. On a balance of payments basis, American private investment consistently produces a higher rate of return in Africa than in any other region.

Aware of the role that the market plays in the creation of wealth and the efficient allocation of resources, many African governments continue efforts to establish conditions conducive to broad-based growth and sustainable economic development. These efforts include increased and more effective investment in human and physical capital, and poverty alleviation. African and U.S. participants agreed upon the importance of fiscal and monetary discipline, increasing domestic savings, creating improved conditions for private domestic and international investment, access to capital and technology, sustainable environmental practices, a healthy, well-educated citizenry, and transparent, predictable governance based on the rule of law and the consent of the governed.

/...

Through continued technical and development assistance, and through programs that facilitate private sector growth and development, the United States is committed to helping its African partners in this vital effort. At the same time, the U.S. will endeavor to increase support for African regional cooperation and integration, economic reform, democracy, good governance, and other shared objectives.

Long-term trends throughout Africa are encouraging. Many African nations are undertaking economic reforms and are making substantial progress in consolidating democracy and creating more inclusive societies. Our Partnership is committed to bolstering these positive developments where they are already in place and to nurturing the seeds of hope where turmoil has impeded their growth.

Africa is a vast and varied continent facing significant challenges as well as extraordinary opportunities. Conflicts impede economic, social, and political development, and they exact a terrible human toll. They also form breeding grounds for transnational threats such as terrorism, arms proliferation, crime syndicates, drug trafficking, and environmental degradation. If unchecked, these scourges could impede the hard-won gains of the last decade. The United States is committed to helping African nations and their regional organizations develop greater capacity to prevent and resolve conflicts. African participants welcomed the intensification of that American commitment and reaffirmed their responsibility - and determination - to solve their own problems.

THE WAY FORWARD

Discussion covered a broad range of economic and political issues, identifying opportunities for deeper mutual engagement and establishing procedures to address differences. The United States explained the philosophy of the Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity in Africa announced by the President on June 17, 1997. U.S. officials pointed out that it is based on the premise that economic reforms pursued by African countries have been effective and that reforming countries make the best use of external assistance. The United States should therefore make increasing efforts to devote special attention to reforming countries. Some African participants asked that the Partnership find ways to include all African countries at each stage of the reform process, which the United States assured them was a shared objective of the Partnership.

Trade

African participants called for the rapid passage by the U.S. Congress of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, both as a vital symbol of increased U.S. engagement and as evidence of U.S. support for African efforts to grow through increased openness to international trade and investment. Participants endorsed the premises underlying the Act, which would help integrate Africa into the global economy and build a strong commercial partnership between Africa and the United States. To enhance this partnership, the Department of Commerce Foreign Commercial Service will expand its country coverage to further assist U.S. businesses interested

/...

in Africa. The participants noted that the benefits of increased trade would run in both directions. The Act would foster increased two-way trade. It would also attract investment to build African capacity to compete in the global economy, generating employment and planting the seeds for other market-based production.

The Act would also facilitate trade and investment by making the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) more predictable, by extending the program for ten years. African Ministers called for the expansion of the number of GSP product lines, and the United States noted that it recently added some 1800 products under the GSP umbrella for Least Developed Countries, 29 of which are in Africa. These additional benefits would be extended by the Act to all eligible sub-Saharan African countries. Last year the United States announced GSP cumulation benefits for eligible members of SADC, WAEMU, and the EAC. Participants agreed that there is significant potential for increased African exports to the United States. One way of realizing this potential is through better understanding of U.S. laws, regulations, and procedures. African participants asked the United States to continue to expand programs that increase African understanding of U.S. market access requirements. The U.S. is planning seminars for sub-Saharan African nations on GSP in the near future.

African participants noted the specific problems and needs of small, island, and/or landlocked states, which may be marginalized in the process of globalization and liberalization. The United States noted the progress many African countries have made in facilitating access for foreign business enterprises and encouraged further liberalization of the business climate. At the same time, the participants noted that access to each other's markets needs to be further liberalized. The U.S. will support a request for a continuation of the current WTO Lome waiver for a sufficiently-long transitional period for non-reciprocal trade preferences and commodity protocols in favor of African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) states in a post-Lome IV period as required by the present Convention.

African participants also called for the United States to continue to increase technical assistance to Africa's public and private sectors to promote Africa's integration into the global economy and the system of WTO rules. The U.S. is conducting a series of workshops in Africa on the WTO for the public and private sectors. The U.S. and African participants also agreed on the need for multilateral institutions to more effectively coordinate and cooperate with the WTO on trade and investment issues affecting African countries, primarily in the area of technical assistance. African participants asked the United States to support OAU/AEC permanent observer status in the WTO. The U.S. agreed to support this, in principle, pending the decision of the WTO on modalities for observership. The United States encouraged African governments to play a more active role in the WTO, and it has asked the Chairman of the WTO's General Council to undertake consultations to resolve the observer issue. African and U.S. representatives agreed to establish a mechanism for regular consultations on WTO and related matters, in Geneva and Washington as preparation for the WTO Ministerial advances.

/...

Investment

African Ministers agreed to continue improving investment conditions and to market their countries more effectively. The United States, in turn, will seek more vigorously to encourage U.S. business to explore opportunities in Africa. This would stimulate employment in the countries of investment as well as in the United States, as American firms service those investments and increase their trade with Africa's growing economies. In this context, the participants agreed on the need to pursue regular dialogue on U.S.-Africa trade and investment issues.

The United States noted programs already contributing to this effort, starting with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). OPIC is currently providing nearly $1 billion in insurance and financing to 50 projects in 20 sub-Saharan countries. To facilitate its work it has executed new bilateral investment agreements with 12 sub-Saharan countries just since the President announced his economic Partnership initiative in 1997. Later that year, OPIC launched a $120 million New Africa Opportunity Fund for Southern Africa and a $150 million Modern Africa Growth and Investment Fund. It will also support one or more new private equity funds with aggregate capital of up to $500 million to be invested in privately sponsored infrastructure projects in sub-Saharan Africa.

The United States affirmed its interest in negotiating Bilateral Investment Treaties and Trade and Investment Framework Agreements with additional African nations and regional organizations. Participants identified opportunities for expanded cooperation in agribusiness and energy, and African Ministers requested investment in those and other core sectors -- such as industry, mining, tourism, telecommunications, transportation, and education -- that would have a major impact on their economies. They took advantage of a networking luncheon this week to discuss these priorities with American business representatives. The United States noted the investment guides it prepares on an annual basis for each African country and the help it has given a number of African countries in producing investor roadmaps. It also noted USAID's new Africa Trade and Investment Policy program developed under the Partnership. This program helps the strongest-reforming African governments and regional organizations improve the legal and regulatory environment for trade and investment activities. African Ministers expressed appreciation for these programs and asked for expanded American collaboration with African agencies that facilitate new investment.

Many ministers expressed frustration that while they had taken many economic reforms and adopted steps to address corruption and governance issues, foreign investment levels were still very disappointing. They said that the misperception of Africa among developed countries is profound and acting as a deterrent to the inflow of foreign investment and capital.

Finance

African and U.S. participants also discussed developments in international capital markets, current volatility in those markets, and ways in which African governments can best take advantage of international markets while safeguarding their economies from risks inherent in global financial markets.

Several ministers issued an appeal for the international community to develop an effective means for dealing with the severe financial problems faced by those countries emerging from conflict and called for closer collaboration between the IMF and World Bank across the board. The United States welcomed African suggestions that there should be greater and more regular communication with African nations on progress to reform the international financial architecture.

Most sub-Saharan African nations remain heavily reliant on flows of external financial support. Participants noted that the international financial institutions continued to be a major source of such support in 1998. The World Bank and African Development Bank provided over $5.4 billion of loans, investments, and grants to sub-Saharan Africa in that year, while the IMF has about $3 billion of commitments outstanding under current arrangements. The great majority of this funding is on highly concessional terms: new World Bank commitments to Africa under IDA represented about 35% of its global commitments of $7.1 billion in 1998 – the largest of any geographic region.

The United States reiterated its commitment to continued support for substantial programming by the international financial institutions in reforming sub-Saharan countries. The recent record demonstrates the strength of resolve in this respect, including a pledge of $800 million for the IDA-12 replenishment, making the United States the largest donor. Also, the United States maintained its position as the largest donor in the replenishment of the African Development Fund, and it supported a $7 billion capital increase for the African Development Bank, in which the United States is the largest non-African shareholder. The U.S. Administration has requested in its current budget a $50 million contribution to the trust fund for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC).

U.S. officials also described programs designed to support access by both American and African businesses to private equity and other forms of financing for ventures in Africa, including through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Export-Import Bank, and the Trade and Development Agency. Participants encouraged closer cooperation between U.S. agencies and the African Development Bank and other regional institutions especially regarding project finance. African participants expressed concerns about the Interagency Credit Risk Assessment System (ICRAS).

Participants also noted the critical importance of strengthening the financial sector and increasing mobilization of domestic savings. They agreed that the micro-enterprise sector is important to Africa's economic development, financial sector growth, employment generation, and poverty alleviation. The informal micro-finance network should be seen as an integral component of the larger financial sector. They agreed that there are a variety of approaches for creating a healthy enabling environment for micro-enterprise prosperity. Governments should move cautiously, with a delicate hand and nuanced approaches to improve regulations, policy and supervision, including self-regulation by the pertinent sector. Finally, they discussed the link between micro-enterprise development and exports.

The Peace Corps, African Development Foundation, and USAID are already engaged in the promotion of micro-enterprise programs, as are African and American NGOS. The United States will seek to increase support for these programs, and African governments will seek to increase access to private credit and entrepreneurial opportunities for small investors, especially women.

Debt

All agreed that excessive debt burdens impede development and the transfer of new resources to countries in great need. The United States outlined its policy approach of providing relief – in concert with other major donors and the international financial institutions through Paris Club and HIPC – to governments that have taken steps to put their economies on a sound footing through the Paris Club. The U.S. noted the general consensus that economic reform by debtor countries themselves is the primary means by which countries in Africa will grow and sustain debt burdens in the future. Ministers also discussed the tension in debt policy between the desire for relief and the need to preserve a "culture of credit" in borrowing countries that will support private lending and encourage the effective use of loans.

African Ministers expressed appreciation for the relief provided by the international community. Some Ministers, however, stated forcefully that existing debt programs are not adequate to address the problems of a substantial number of Africans countries. A number of Ministers reported that their countries simply were not eligible for the HIPC program. Some said that forgiveness, not rescheduling, of bilateral debts was needed for a broader group of countries. Others said that debt relief for amounts owed to multilateral financial institutions has to be deeper, faster and broader, and a few said that debt relief is not the issue – but that all debt must be forgiven for the poorest countries.

Several Ministers also explained that their total debt, domestic and foreign, which remains unaddressed in international debt relief schemes, also constitutes a serious impediment to some governments' ability to finance development and social necessities. Several Ministers called for a new approach to international debt relief programs, with relief designed to suit a specific country's individual circumstances – on a case by case basis.

Some Ministers said that the determination of eligibility for debt relief and concessional lending does not take adequate account of the persistence of poverty in countries that have relatively higher GDPs. In this context, some Ministers requested debt relief, including multilateral debt, for middle-income African countries. These countries also have a lot of potential but cannot develop that potential if they remain heavily indebted.

The United States explained that its approach is designed to ensure that no country committed to fundamental reform is left with a debt burden that keeps it from meeting its people's basic human needs and spurring growth. To this end, the United States announced a major debt reduction initiative that includes components providing for deeper and accelerated debt reduction and inclusion of additional countries into existing debt reduction programs, both multilateral and bilateral. This proposal to the international community could result in forgiving an additional $70 billion in global debt.

/...

The United States said it would seek significant improvements to the HIPC initiative at the Cologne Summit of the G-7 countries in June 1999:

First, a new focus on early relief by international financial institutions, which now reduce debt only at the end of the HIPC program; second, the complete forgiveness of all bilateral concessional loans to the poorest countries; third, deeper and broader reduction of bilateral debts, raising the amount to 90%; fourth, donor countries should commit to provide at least 90% of new development assistance on a grant basis to countries eligible for debt reduction; fifth, develop new approaches to help countries emerging from conflicts that have not had the chance to establish reform records and need immediate relief and concessional finance; and sixth, support for IMF gold sales to do its part, and additional contributions by the U.S. and other countries to the World Bank Trust Fund to help meet the cost of this initiative. The United States believes we should be prepared to provide even greater relief in exceptional cases where it could make a real difference.

The United States recognized the need for a continuing global dialogue on the issue of indebtedness of the poor countries and anticipated that the subject will remain high on the international agenda. As to the immediate future, the United States said that for its part, it expects to participate with other creditors during 1999-2000, through the Paris Club, in further debt relief for African countries totaling $2.9 billion. Having already forgiven $1.1 billion of bilateral concessional debt owed by sub-Saharan countries in the early '90s, the United States will forgive additional debt owed by strong-reforming African countries under the President's Partnership for Growth and Economic Opportunity. During 1999-2000, this could amount to over $400 million of concessional debt owed by six African countries, complementing Paris club and HIPC debt relief.

In conclusion, Ministers applauded the initiative proposed by the United States and some underscored their desire to see debt relief provided to an expanded range of countries. Ministers underscored the need to provide new financing to eligible countries in a manner which eases rather than exacerbates debt burdens. The United States reported that since 1985 it has provided new bilateral financing primarily in the form of grants to the poorest African countries to help keep their debt manageable – with grants totaling almost $12 billion for the most heavily indebted sub-Saharan countries. Ministers joined the United States in its consistent and forceful call to donor countries to adopt the practice to help avoid the recurrence of excessive debt burdens in the future. The United States and African nations agreed to continue close and substantive consultations on Africa's debt burden in appropriate fora, as well as bilaterally.

Infrastructure

Participants recognized the critical role of infrastructure, particularly transportation and telecommunications networks, in supporting Africa's economic growth, facilitating national and regional integration, and expanding trade regionally as well as globally. Poor transportation and telecommunications infrastructures continue to be two of the greatest barriers to Africa's development. Currently Africa's roads, ports, and airports are not capable of efficiently handling increased international trade flows. Poor telecommunications raises costs for all users. The competitive advantages that Africa enjoys in terms of human and natural resources are severely

diminished by the inefficiency of these systems. Participants agreed on the importance of continued privatization of transportation and telecommunications enterprises, harmonization of regulations and standards, and increased private investment and international financial resources to improve African economic infrastructure.

Participants agreed to work more closely together to identify Africa's transportation corridors that are needed to support regional and international trade. African participants asked that the United States and other donors give priority to such regional projects as the SADC Development Corridors, the East Africa Regional Road and Communications Networks, the Trans-African and Transnational Road Network in Central Africa, and the ECOWAS Transnational Highway Project. They expressed appreciation for the Safe Skies for Africa initiative, which seeks to quadruple the number of African countries that meet ICAO standards for safety oversight and to improve airport security and air navigation services in Africa. They recognized that improving safety and security opens the door for expanded air service, and that air service means more opportunity for trade and tourism – two powerful engines for the economic growth of African nations. Participants also acknowledged other U.S. transportation and communication projects, including the Federal Highway Administration's technology transfer centers.

U.S. agencies, particularly the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), the Export-Import Bank (Exim), and the Trade and Development Agency (TDA), agreed to expand their engagement with African countries and regional organizations in an effort to improve African air, surface, and maritime transportation, as well as communications infrastructure, through technical assistance and OPIC support for private investment in these areas.

Agribusiness

The participants agreed that agriculture in most African countries constitutes the backbone of their economies and is the major foreign exchange earner. They also highlighted agriculture's key role in employment and food security. They noted that previous African and international policies had impeded Africa's ability to produce and export up to its competitive potential. Ministers agreed on the need for further reforms, technical assistance, and international cooperation to open markets for agricultural products. They also agreed on the need for more cooperative research efforts in agriculture, and for U.S. assistance in attracting investment and technologies needed for value-added agricultural processing ventures in Africa. The issue of the market-distorting aspects of subsidies was discussed.

Energy

The need for sustainable supplies of energy to support basic human needs and aspirations is widely recognized as a critical component of development. Efficient energy systems are a key element of economic growth, productivity increases, and international competitiveness. Competitive energy markets promote efficiency, investment in improved technology, lower costs (including to consumers), and a higher level of national welfare. Energy also plays a key role in international competition and the ability of a country to attract private investment. Policy and regulatory measures in support of competitive, open markets that facilitate free trade and investment in energy are recognized as an important component of critical infrastructure

development. The United States and Africa stressed the importance of coordinating more effectively and economically Africa's national and regional energy and environmental programs. A strong, efficient, competitive energy sector can support growth and sustainable development and address local, regional, and global environmental concerns, including the effects of climate change.

Environment

African participants urged the United States to ratify the UN Convention to Combat Desertification. They also indicated the need for the U.S. Government to assume a leadership role in ensuring that industrial countries refrain from dumping and storage of toxic industrial waste and byproducts in Africa that are detrimental to its environment in general, and to its peoples' health in particular.

Regional Integration

Building on the Abuja Treaty as a cornerstone of regional integration, African participants stressed that regional groupings enhance African influence in the international arena and asked the United States to support such organizations as SADC, EAC, WAEMU, ECOWAS, UDEAC, CEMAC, COMESA, ECCAS, IGAD, and the IOC. Participants agreed that economic integration within Africa can improve economies of scale and reduce transaction costs for its own citizens as well as international business.

They also agreed that African regional organizations can help resolve conflicts, as ECOMOG has done, for example, in Liberia and Sierra Leone. In that regard, the United States pointed to the assistance it has provided regional organizations, such as ECOMOG and the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, as well as its technical assistance for economic integration to organizations such as SADC, EAC, IGAD, and COMESA. The United States is interested in extending that support to other regional groupings and agreed to look for additional ways to bolster regional integration in Africa, including encouragement for creative approaches by the international financial institutions. In the meantime it is coordinating closely with its SADC partners to ensure that the first-ever U.S.-SADC forum is a success. It encourages member states in SADC and EAC to ratify instruments that will make them eligible for GSP cumulation, as it encourages other African sub-regional organizations to take the trade-liberalizing steps that would make their members also eligible for such benefits.

Development Assistance

All U.S. and African participants agreed that development assistance remains an essential component of the effort to promote sustainable growth and alleviate poverty in Africa. Some participants noted recent research demonstrating that foreign assistance is most effective when provided to countries pursuing the strongest reforms. All agreed that it is essential to orient a component of current development assistance to support reforms now underway in order to elicit the trade, investment, and entrepreneurial responses needed to provide Africans more widespread and lasting opportunities to improve their standard of living.

African participants expressed deep appreciation for U.S. humanitarian assistance, which has saved millions of lives, as well as for assistance that addresses long-term development, for example the African Food Security Initiative and other programs that support a broad range of agricultural training and cooperative extension. At the same time, African participants expressed the need for the United States to support the United Nations through policies and funding, as these support Africa. To this end, African ministers called on the United States to make good on its financial commitments to the United Nations.

It was noted that U.S. assistance comes in many forms and through many actors such as USAID, the Peace Corps, the African Development Foundation, NGOs, and international organizations to which the U.S. is a major, often the leading, contributor; for example, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, the IMF, the World Bank, including IDA, and the African Development Bank and Fund.

African Ministers expressed great appreciation for the pledge President Clinton made during his trip to Africa last year to work with Congress to restore development assistance for Africa to historic high levels. As reflected in his budget requests for fiscal years 1999 and 2000, the Administration is following through on that commitment, with a focus on those countries where the policy environment is conducive to development. Of course, the nature of assistance and how it is used are every bit as important as the level of funds. Part of this equation must be finding the right balance between assistance provided through governments and through NGOs. U.S and African participants agreed to consult closely on African national priorities, and they noted the particular importance of developing human capital.

Human Capital

African and U.S. participants shared ideas on how to enhance development of Africa's human capital and institutional capacity. They agreed that increasing literacy and numeracy by improving the quality of and access to basic education is the foremost area to address. This is the first step toward skills development, higher education, life-long learning, and success in a knowledge-based economy. They also agreed that globalization and technological innovation demand a transformation in educational approaches. Educational systems should be reformed so that they are more relevant, purposeful, and practical. This is especially true in the area of empowerment of women. The United States described new technologies and strategic partnerships between African and U.S. universities, schools, and civic education institutions envisioned by President Clinton when he announced his Education Initiative. Africans welcomed that initiative and urged its speedy implementation. They also asked the United States to support Africa's research and development programs, including with information technology. African and U.S. participants agreed on the importance of a policy environment that will encourage the transfer, development, and application of appropriate technology, and the United States agreed to look into increasing assistance in this area, which is already substantial through the Leland Initiative. Some African delegates requested that the initiative be expanded to other African countries, particularly those in Central Africa.

Participants noted that there is a large number of professionals and technically trained people who have left Africa. Participants agreed on the need to reverse the brain drain through an African-led effort.

HIV/AIDS

The participants reviewed the severe social and economic impact of HIV/AIDS globally and in Africa. HIV/AIDS has already begun to arrest or reverse significant development gains. The participants acknowledged the imperative for a strong political, multi-sectoral, and public health response to deal with the epidemic and its consequences. Senegal and Uganda offer models of how the incidence of new cases can be reduced. Participants agreed on the need for open and serious political discussion and the involvement of the populace at the grassroots level to combat this epidemic. The United States and Africa agreed to deepen their partnership in the areas of collaborative research on HIV/AIDS, effective and affordable treatment, and cooperative efforts to build African capacity to better monitor the prevalence of the disease.

Transnational Threats

Participants undertook to enhance cooperation in combating such transnational security threats as crime, narcotics, terrorism, and arms proliferation. All expressed strong support for the West African small arms moratorium. The United States and African participants expressed their mutual commitment to expand and build on existing cooperation to address transnational threats. The United States reiterated its sincere thanks for the cooperation it has received from African governments in the aftermath of the bombings of its Embassies in Tanzania and Kenya to ensure the mutual safety of all our citizens. They and the United States re-committed to working with each other to fight crime and disease and to ensure environmentally sound development.

Democracy, Governance, and Human Rights

African and American participants agreed on the mutually reinforcing nature of economic development and democracy, and they shared ideas on the links between the two. They thus reaffirmed their commitment to promote economic growth, democracy, and respect for worker and human rights. In this vein, the U.S. announced a new program to work with Africa to combat child labor. Participants touched on all aspects of good governance, and they agreed on the need to strengthen judicial systems and governmental checks and balances, introduce simple and clear regulations, and ensure accountability. Participants recognized the obligation borne by public institutions, notably including budget ministries and central banks, to be transparent and accountable in their handling of public funds. To this end, participants noted their interest in following current standards of public accountability, including the IMF's Code of Good Practices on Fiscal Transparency. The United States, for its part, agreed to support technical assistance, both bilaterally and multilaterally via the international financial institutions, to enable African governments to meet these standards.

While Africa is not the only place harboring corruption, participants agreed that corruption wastes Africa's scarce resources and impedes its full integration into the world economy. Corruption's negative impact is magnified in poorer countries, compounding development

problems. Participants agreed that tackling corruption requires coordinated action – both national and international, including improved investigatory tools, better institutional and human capacity-building, and protection for anti-corruption advocates. African participants requested U.S. assistance with these efforts. There was general agreement that African countries should accede to a binding African anti-corruption convention. The U.S. encouraged this, noting progress made thus far.

There was general agreement on the need for greater international cooperation to strengthen the rule of law and democratic institutions. African participants shared lessons learned and success stories on how to implement strong reforms in these areas. They welcomed the Great Lakes Justice Initiative, which seeks to break cycles of violence by building credible, impartial justice systems and by bolstering ethnic reconciliation at the grassroots level. Another U.S. initiative in this field is Radio Democracy for Africa, which will work with African and American media to disseminate news responsibly through the region.

Conflict Resolution

Participants agreed that violent conflict poses a great threat to African reform efforts. They further noted that, while essential security needs must be addressed, it also is essential that military expenditure burdens not be allowed to divert scarce resources from vital social and developmental programs. Conflict saps resources and destabilizes countries and regions, scaring off potential investors. Participants further agreed that the enabling environment necessary for political and economic reform requires stability derived from strong mechanisms that prevent or mitigate violent conflict and its profound and lasting effects. African participants stressed the need for U.S. support for conflict resolution and programs aimed at integrating ex-combatants and demobilized soldiers in development efforts.

The participants agreed on the importance of building the capacity of African mechanisms to prevent and resolve conflicts. The OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, and Resolution could serve as one such mechanism, but participants stressed that carefully planned support for increasing its capacity was essential. Many of the participants cited ECOMOG's contributions towards mitigating increased violence in the subregion, as well as collaborative efforts to build peacekeeping capacity, such as the African Crisis Response Initiative. They also expressed concern about the ongoing conflicts in Central Africa and their damaging effects on the development process, and they encouraged current sub-regional initiatives, such as COPAX, to prevent and resolve conflicts and to build confidence and peace. The United States and Africa agreed to continue to work together to strengthen African capacity in these areas. One such effort is the establishment of the U.S.-funded African Center for Security Studies and to look for a permanent location for the Center as a means to foster increased military professionalism and civil-military cooperation.

In sum, the United States and its African partners firmly committed to maximize their diplomatic efforts and cooperation on conflict prevention and resolution, a critical component of the growing U.S.- Africa Partnership. All participants also recognized the UN's efforts to resolve conflict in Africa.

ONE STEP, ONE JOURNEY

All agreed that the Ministerial helped further illuminate the breadth and depth of the U.S.-Africa partnership, and set it on a firm foundation for future mutual advancement in the 21st century. They undertook to advance their mutual commitment to work together for the benefit of all concerned. In this vein, they noted the importance of continuing a U.S.-Africa dialogue on issues of common concern and agreed to explore means of ensuring that consultations continue.

United Nations E/1999/105

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
8 July 1999

Original: English

Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5–30 July 1999
Agenda item 14 (a)
Social and human rights questions: Advancement of women

Report of the President of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Note by the Secretary-General

In its resolution 1998/48, the Economic and Social Council requested the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), in cooperation with the Board of Trustees, to present a report to the Council at its substantive session of 1999. In the absence of a Director, the Board of Trustees has undertaken the task of fulfilling the request made by the Council and the report of the President of the Board is being submitted herewith (see annex I). Annex II contains a position paper of the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW entitled "Revitalizing INSTRAW for the twenty-first century".

99-20083 (E) 190799

Annex I

Report of the President of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees

I. Introduction

1. At its forty-seventh plenary meeting and by its resolution 1998/48 of 31 July 1998, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations requested that the INSTRAW Director, in cooperation with the Board of Trustees. present a report to the Economic and Social Council at its next substantive session, containing:

(a) A detailed analysis of the reasons for the financial and staffing situation of the Institute and the implications thereof for the Institute, at all levels, including an up-to-date balance sheet of its finances and reserves and all the steps taken to strengthen its financial and staffing situation, in accordance with the relevant articles of the statute of the Institute, including financial administration as contained in the financial rules and regulations of the United Nations, as well as system support;

(b) Information on the progress of the preparation of a strategic and comprehensive work plan and on steps taken for its implementation;

(c) Information on the outcome of the planned inter-agency brainstorming workshop and the planned international dialogue on research priorities.

2. While the Institute is currently without a Director, the Board of Trustees has undertaken the task of fulfilling the request made by the Council in the present report, based on the documents prepared by the former Director in response to resolution 1998/48, which were considered by the INSTRAW Board of Trustees at its nineteenth session (see INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.3; INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.4; and INSTRAW/BT/1999/CRP.4).

II. Analysis of the reasons for the financial and staffing situation of the Institute and the implications thereof

3. Voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund of INSTRAW experienced a first decline in 1991. In 1992, the Institute had the ability to recover the drop experienced in the previous year. However, since 1993 voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund have declined steadily to reach the current acute levels and affecting its ability to meet the scope of performance required by its mandate.

A. Reasons

4. INSTRAW was established as an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations, to be funded solely by voluntary contributions at no cost to the regular budget of the United Nations. While its autonomous nature was considered an asset when INSTRAW was established, particularly in terms of the possibility of carrying out research, it has placed the Institute in a vulnerable position in terms of maintaining a sound financial base. Fluctuations in donors' contributions have seriously affected the Institute's financial base, particularly since the 1992–1993 biennium.

5. The proposed merger with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has further reinforced the declining trend in donor contributions. As pointed out by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) in its 1997 audit, there was an inordinate delay in deciding on the proposed merger. This in turn had an adverse effect on the ability of INSTRAW to attract and retain qualified staff and achieve satisfactory levels of programme implementation. Thus, a vicious circle has developed: inadequate levels of funding hindered the sustainability of the Institute's operations, resulting in low level of programme implementation, thereby affecting its ability to attract funds and sufficient human resources.

6. INSTRAW has been unable to overcome the negative effects of the vicious circle, in part due to the ambiguity of its autonomous status. While the autonomy of INSTRAW is strictly observed as regards its source of financing (i.e., voluntary contributions to its Trust Fund), the administration of its Trust Fund, authorization for expenditures, recruitment of staff, representational travel etc. must be submitted, cleared and authorized by the corresponding departments of the United Nations Secretariat that provide programme support to INSTRAW as established in article VII of its statute. And yet INSTRAW is unable to access the overall benefits of the United Nations, such as a financial subvention, that might have acted as a buffer against its financial and staffing crisis.

7. Moreover, as indicated in various audit exercises conducted at INSTRAW in 1991, 1996 and 1997, including

an OIOS evaluation, important shortcomings in the level and scope of support services that are due to the Institute from the United Nations Secretariat have affected the overall output of INSTRAW.

B. Implications

8. Due to the deterioration of the financial situation of INSTRAW over the past few years, INSTRAW's already limited budget for the 1998–1999 biennium had to be reduced from $3,837,545 to $2,188,910 (a reduction of more than 42 per cent). This measure imposed the reformulation and reduction of substantive activities programmed for 1999, a freeze in the filling of vacant Professional posts, including those of chiefs of units, and the abolition of eight General Service posts. During the current biennium, INSTRAW's original staffing resources have had to be reduced by over 82 per cent. At present, the Institute does not have the leadership, sufficient staff nor the financial means with which to formulate and implement a programme of work for the forthcoming biennium. The dimensions of the hardship imposed on the Institute by the lack of adequate staffing and financing need to be seriously addressed.

9. Furthermore, during the current biennium, INSTRAW was compelled to close its printing facilities at Santo Domingo, as well as its liaison office in New York. With the financial resources made available by the United Nations Controller in January 1999 and later in June 1999, INSTRAW's management has made provisions to cover the Institute's operations within the limited staffing configuration until 31 December 1999. Detailed information on the latter is contained in document INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.3.

C. Steps to strengthen INSTRAW's financial and staffing situation

10. Despite the critical situation which INSTRAW has experienced during the past few years, there are clear calls for the Institute to continue to carry out its mandate for research and training activities, as well as networking and information-sharing, as evidenced in the Beijing Platform for Action (para. 334) and in Council resolutions 1996/39 and 1998/48, and General Assembly resolution 52/95. Accordingly, a number of steps have been taken in order to strengthen INSTRAW's financial and staffing situation, as described below.

Finances

11. During 1998, the President of the INSTRAW Board of Trustees and the INSTRAW Director approached the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, who is also the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to INSTRAW, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women and other senior officials of the Secretariat, and expressed the need to address the financial situation of the Institute. Close communication was also maintained with members of the Institute's Board of Trustees to further strengthen their support for INSTRAW's fund-raising endeavours.

12. The former Director of INSTRAW held separate meetings with members of the European Union, the Group of 77 and China at United Nations Headquarters, and briefed them on the Institute's financial situation. Representatives of the host country were also briefed on several occasions.

13. At its nineteenth session (5–7 May 1999, New York), the INSTRAW Board of Trustees reiterated its trust that member States will reinstate the level of contributions made to the INSTRAW Trust Fund. To improve the financial situation of the Institute, the Board recommended a number of activities, including the establishment of a "Friends of INSTRAW" group and the pursuit of establishing a liaison office in Europe, as well as the reopening of a liaison office in New York in order to increase INSTRAW's visibility and enhance its contact with donors. In addition, the Board recommended that a subvention from the United Nations regular budget be explored. To that end, the Board held preliminary discussions with relevant offices of the Secretariat.

Staffing

14. Notwithstanding INSTRAW's intention to reinstate an adequate level of staffing resources, the Institute cannot report any progress in this area. On the contrary, INSTRAW's staffing situation has become more precarious given its financial constraints. In addition, the post of Director became vacant in March 1999. Due to the uncertainty of the current financial situation, the post has not been filled to date.

15. Seriously concerned with the staffing situation, at its nineteenth session, the Board of Trustees recommended that the post of Director be filled as quickly as possible to provide the necessary leadership within INSTRAW for its revitalization. It also recommended that the Institute continue to operate with current core staff until 31 December 1999 in order to enable it to comply with the requirements of the Council and the General Assembly as well as to

finalize the ongoing programmes. The latter has been already approved.

16. Although limited, the Institute's staff at its headquarters at Santo Domingo constitute a base upon which INSTRAW can rebuild. However, to implement the strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003, the level of human resources of the Institute must be reinforced.

17. More information on the steps to be taken to strengthen INSTRAW's financial and staffing situation is contained in the position paper prepared by INSTRAW's Board of Trustees for the 1999 substantive session of ECOSOC (see annex II).

III. Information on progress in the preparation of a strategic and comprehensive work plan and steps taken for its implementation

A. Progress

18. In accordance with the requirements of Council resolution 1998/48, INSTRAW has completed the preparation of a strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003, which proposes a new vision for INSTRAW and a strategy for its realization. It sets out strategic goals and actions that will:

(a) Sharpen the Institute's programmatic focus;

(b) Increase cooperation with research and training institutes worldwide;

(c) Become a reference point for research and training activities;

(d) Provide a channel for research and training on women/gender issues into the United Nations policy process;

(e) Strengthen outreach and regional representation;

(f) Enable a cost-effective mode of operation.

19. The document outlines a comprehensive work programme for the period 2000–2003 that effectively responds to emerging issues and imperatives for the achievement of gender equality and the advancement of women. It also takes into account the comparative advantages of the Institute's mandate within the United Nations system to conduct research and related training activities.

20. The proposed work programme consists of (a) two broad research subprogrammes on engendering socio-political and socio-economic development; (b) a new training approach based on the development of guidelines rather than full-fledged training materials; (c) the establishment of a global on-line service on gender resources; and (d) a plan for networking, collaboration and partnership. The activities included under these subprogrammes are consistent with the priorities of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996–2001.

B. Steps taken for implementation

21. The strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003 was presented and discussed at an inter-agency brainstorming workshop held in New York on 3 and 4 May 1999.

22. At its nineteenth session, the INSTRAW Board of Trustees discussed and approved the strategic plan and work programme as contained in document INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.4.

23. Implementation of the strategic plan and work programme is subject to the infusion of funds into the Institute's Trust Fund to allow for the revitalization of INSTRAW, including the reinstatement of sufficient human resources. Pending increased financial contributions, the Institute will elaborate a programme budget for the 2000–2001 biennium.

Inter-agency brainstorming workshop

24. The inter-agency brainstorming workshop was held on 3 and 4 May 1999 in New York, prior to the nineteenth session of the Board of Trustees. Representatives from INSTRAW and its Board of Trustees, the Division for the Advancement of Women, UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) representing all the regional commissions, attended the meeting. Representatives of the Permanent Missions of the Dominican Republic and the United Kingdom to the United Nations were also present. The meeting addressed two main agenda items: emerging trends and challenges for gender equality and conceptual frameworks and work strategies of different United Nations agencies responding to these emerging trends.

25. INSTRAW presented a discussion paper on emerging trends and challenges as well as the strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003, and received valuable inputs from the participants. Special focus was given to INSTRAW's

new approach to research and training, which is based on increased networking and collaboration with academic and research institutions and the creation/maintenance of a global interactive service on gender research and training resources. The discussions, based on presentations by the various participating agencies, highlighted the usefulness of increased networking both for the work of the United Nations and for capacity-building of the local and national research centres that will be part of this network. One important point raised during this meeting related to the need to seek further mechanisms and instruments that will enable linking more effectively the work of the different United Nations entities, especially INSTRAW, in providing research findings to guide policy recommendations, and in turn receiving feedback from the operational agencies on their research and training needs. In addition, some participants pointed out that the newly proposed training approach of INSTRAW was pertinent given that the other United Nations gender-related agencies have established mechanisms as well as the resources to conduct training and capacity-building activities.

International dialogue on research and training priorities in the area of women in development

26. The international dialogue on research and training priorities in the area of women in development that was scheduled to take place on 21 and 22 January 1999 at the Hague, with the support of the Government of Netherlands, was cancelled due to low registration. However, if feasible, INSTRAW will pursue holding such a meeting during the forthcoming biennium.

IV. Concluding remarks

27. INSTRAW trusts that the information contained herein provides the Council with the information requested in its resolution 1998/48. The INSTRAW Board of Trustees is confident that the present report will enable member States to become fully informed on INSTRAW's current situation and will lead towards the reinstatement of former levels of their support for INSTRAW's work. The Board takes this opportunity to reiterate that the financial and political support of all member States is imperative for maintaining the only United Nations entity solely devoted to research and training on the advancement of women, especially at this time when all nations and sectors in the world are committed to address gender equality. On the eve of the five-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action and the special session of the General Assembly on the theme "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", there is still much need for research, training and networking for the advancement of women and gender equality; INSTRAW has a crucial and unique role to play in this area.

Annex II

Position paper prepared by the INSTRAW Board of Trustees: Revitalizing INSTRAW for the twenty-first century

I. Introduction

1. Voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund of INSTRAW experienced a first decline in 1991. In 1992, the Institute had the ability to recover the drop experienced in the previous year. However, since 1993, voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund have declined steadily to reach the current acute levels. Without the reinstatement of the financial support of donor countries, the Institute will cease to function by the end of 1999. At its nineteenth session, the Board of Trustees assessed the situation of INSTRAW in the light of changing global conditions and the reform efforts of the United Nations for greater efficiency and coordination of all its programmes. It established a working group consisting of the Bureau of the Board and one representative of INSTRAW staff. A representative of the United Nations Secretariat served as a resource person to the working group. The working group was charged with the task of preparing the present position paper on measures for revitalizing the Institute and securing its sustainability which the Board could present for the consideration of the Council at its substantive session of 1999.

2. The Board considers that closing down INSTRAW when the international community is preparing to assess progress in achieving the objectives set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action would leave an institutional gap in implementation machinery. The role of INSTRAW in promoting research and training on women's situation and development was clearly defined in the Platform for Action. While recognizing the importance for research and training on women and gender issues, the Platform mandated INSTRAW to review its work programme and develop a programme for implementing those aspects of the Platform for Action that fall within its mandate to identify those types of research and research methodologies to be given priority, strengthen national capacities to carry out women's studies and gender research and develop networks of research institutions that can be mobilized for that purpose (para. 334).

3. In compliance with that mandate, INSTRAW proposes to take a two-pronged approach, which involves networking with research institutes around the world, while working closely with the relevant intergovernmental bodies by providing the necessary concepts and data for policy deliberations. This will be accomplished through programming on critical new and emerging issues and through strategic advocacy based on both its own research findings and findings of research conducted elsewhere. For that purpose, greater coordination should be ensured between INSTRAW and the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, other United Nations agencies and programmes, other international and regional intergovernmental organizations, and with other research and training institutes within and outside the system, such as those of the United Nations University and the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

4. In order for the Institute to play the role given to it by member States in its statute and in the Platform for Action, INSTRAW must be rapidly and effectively revitalized. The proposed revitalization is based on: (a) a strategy and programme that builds on the Institute's strengths within the context of the changing international agenda, (b) closer collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the intergovernmental process, (c) more proactive and effective linkages with research institutes around the world, (d) streamlined administrative and management procedures in order to increase efficiency and accountability, and (e) the provision of a subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations to cover costs of core staff as a means of insuring INSTRAW's sustainability. Measures to address the immediate and longer-term financial situation of the Institute, however, are essential if this revitalization is to take place.

II. INSTRAW's mandate and comparative advantage

5. INSTRAW was established in 1976 by the Economic and Social Council (resolution 1998 (LX) of 12 May 1976), in conformity with an earlier decision of the General Assembly (resolution 3520 (XXX) of 15 December 1975). The latter decision was based on a recommendation made by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held at Mexico City in 1975. Article I of the statute of the Institute states that INSTRAW was established in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to serve

as a vehicle at the international level for the purpose of undertaking research and establishing training programmes to contribute to the integration and mobilization of women in development, to raise awareness of women's issues worldwide, and to assist women in meeting new challenges and directions.

6. The Fourth World Conference on Women, held at Beijing in 1995, set out an ambitious programme of actions to be taken for achieving gender equality. As a result, many United Nations entities have incorporated a gender perspective into their programmes and have carried out research as a subsidiary aspect of their work.

7. INSTRAW, however, differs from the other entities of the United Nations in that research and training on women and gender is its central focus. Its comparative advantage emanates from its mandate, which as stated in its statutes, calls upon INSTRAW to: (a) carry out gender research and training on a systematic basis, (b) synthesize knowledge and information derived from research and develop user-friendly tools for the use of the research and policy-making communities as well as women's organizations, (c) develop methodologies and instruments that will assist in filling emerging research and training gaps on gender issues; and (d) work systematically with research and training communities in channelling knowledge to and from the international forums.

III. Measures to revitalize INSTRAW

8. A number of measures to revitalize and reform INSTRAW will need to be implemented immediately, taking into consideration its above-mentioned comparative advantage within the United Nations system, the current state of research and training within and outside the system, and its institutional and financial vulnerability. These measures are aimed at strengthening INSTRAW's role as a think-tank, a knowledge-based institution on gender issues that will (a) create a knowledge base through its own research and through increased collaboration and exchange of knowledge with the research and training community worldwide, (b) synthesize, categorize and disseminate such knowledge through computer-mediated communication systems, and (c) act as a catalyst of emerging issues that are of relevance to the efforts of the United Nations for achieving gender equality.

A. Becoming a reference point for research and training

9. INSTRAW, as mandated in its statute and reiterated in the Platform for Action, should be able to access, organize and disseminate existing information on gender research and training worldwide. Furthermore, it has the potential to promote dialogue and stimulate research on emerging issues, as well as to conduct research and training in new areas of concern to the international community.

10. In the past, given the limitations in communications technology, INSTRAW ability to do so was limited. All this has changed with the development and rapid expansion of computer-mediated communication technologies. Many research institutes publish institutional information and research findings on-line. With the expansion of computer-mediated communication, the number will continue to increase. INSTRAW will establish and maintain an electronic global service on research and training resources related to women and gender issues. This service will collect, organize and disseminate information for the use of both the United Nations and other organizations working in the field of women, gender and development. It will enable INSTRAW to serve as a think-tank on analysing policy implications of research findings, identifying emerging challenges for gender equality, and promoting and conducting research in new areas.

11. In order to develop this global interactive service on gender research and training, INSTRAW will establish close collaboration with United Nations University and other research and training institutes both within and outside the United Nations system.

B. Serve as a channel for research and training to the United Nations intergovernmental process

12. Given that INSTRAW reports directly to the Economic and Social Council rather than through the Commission on the Status of Women, which is the intergovernmental body specifically concerned with women's advancement and gender equality, its contributions to the international agenda have not been made sufficiently visible and consequently have not reached its main clients, the international community. In order to reverse this situation, the Board of Trustees proposes that INSTRAW strengthen its collaboration and coordination of its activities with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the

Commission on the Status of Women. This would ensure that all relevant intergovernmental structures and offices of the United Nations Secretariat are duly and timely informed on the Institute's work and progress. Furthermore, as INSTRAW strengthens its collaborative partnerships with national research and training institutions, it will be able to effectively bring the results of their research into the United Nations agenda and work.

13. The Institute will also make a concerted effort to coordinate its research with other United Nations bodies and institutions, especially those involved with women and gender issues. It will continue to participate in the Inter-Agency Committee on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (IACWGE) in order to improve INSTRAW's coordination and collaboration with other United Nations entities, and will increase its visibility and effectiveness within the United Nations system.

C. Sharpening its programmatic focus

14. INSTRAW's proposed research and training activities for 2000–2003 are consistent with the priorities of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women 1996–2001, in which INSTRAW committed itself to research and training on women and poverty, women and the economy, women and armed conflict, women and the media, women in power and decision-making, and women's human rights. However, there are a number of emerging issues where research is necessary to back up policies and programmes for gender equality. Many of these are currently being discussed in the context of preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the theme "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" by the Commission on the Status of Women, IACWGE and other forums. Also, the inter-agency brainstorming workshop held on 3 and 4 May in New York discussed emerging global trends and challenges for gender equality and identified important areas for research and training, such as women and poverty, changing gender roles and identities and women and governance, among others (see INSTRAW/1999/BT/CRP.4).

15. For the period 2000–2003, as outlined in the INSTRAW strategic plan and work programme 2000–2003 (see INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.4), the Institute will develop further some of the issues pertinent to the medium-term plan and address some of the new thematic issues. INSTRAW will focus on the two areas that respond to the main needs for gender research and derivative training. These include (a) engendering socio-political development and enhancing women's participation; (b) engendering socio-economic development and enhancing women's participation.

Engendering socio-political development and enhancing women's participation

16. The main premise guiding INSTRAW's research area is that women's involvement in urban and rural, national and local politics, as well as their untiring efforts to advance women's causes through the mobilization of civil society, contributes not only to gender equality but also to expanding the boundaries of citizenship, democratization, civil society and political decision-making. In the upcoming biennium, INSTRAW will continue to explore the issues of political participation of women and engendering of the political agenda in different countries/regions and at different levels of governance in order to complement its current research on this issue and formulate a comprehensive set of indicators of political empowerment of women and engendered development. By so doing, it also aims to suggest policies that will enable the integration of a gender perspective at different levels of political and social participation and policy-making in different socio-economic, political and cultural conditions.

17. Specific research programmes within this area will address such issues as engendering the political agenda at the local level; women, conflict, and conflict prevention and resolution; and women, human rights and identity politics.

Engendering socio-economic development and enhancing women's participation

18. INSTRAW's research in this area responds to changes in the global economic system. As a multidimensional process of integration and restructuring across borders, globalization holds risks and opportunities for all individuals and social groups. Household incomes and well-being, employment, social insurance programmes and labour migration patterns are all sensitive to changes in economic conditions and economic policies, whether these changes emanate from national or global forces.

19. Specific research programmes will address such issues as women and poverty; social security and household survival strategies; gender impact of the recent Asian crisis; implications of globalization for women in development in the Arab world; and gender dimensions of transition in Central Asia.

D. New training approach

20. No single institution can pretend to meet the training needs in the area of advancement of women. While INSTRAW will continue to provide training on the areas of its expertise upon demand of member States, it will aim to develop training guidelines based on its ongoing research rather than developing fully fledged training materials. It will also strengthen links with gender training institutions so as to be able to maintain an overview of existing training materials and approaches. This will be achieved through the establishment of the proposed global electronic service on gender resources. The information on existing training materials, as well as INSTRAW's training guidelines, will be catalogued so as to provide users with easy reference and access. In addition, the Institute's internship programme will be further strengthened to provide the opportunity for students, particularly those in developing countries, to come to the Institute to work on ongoing programmes and acquire skills in research and training on women, gender and development issues.

E. Strengthening INSTRAW outreach

21. While INSTRAW's outreach and visibility would be increased through increased use of computer-mediated communications and increased involvement in the intergovernmental process, INSTRAW needs to ensure regional presence and representation. This will be done, when resources become available, by:

(a) Re-establishment of the liaison office in New York and in due course the establishment of offices in Europe and elsewhere;

(b) Designation of part-time liaison officers in different countries where INSTRAW's presence needs to be enhanced. These could be qualified researchers who would be willing to represent INSTRAW in relevant forums, maintain close relationship with INSTRAW's work, advocate for INSTRAW etc.;

(c) Strengthening of the network of focal points by streamlining the procedure and rules for their designation and collaboration with the Institute;

(d) Creation of a network of "Friends of INSTRAW", composed of eminent women and men as well as experts on gender and women's issues, to rally support for the Institute and promote its work.

F. Strengthening administrative and managerial accountability

22. In view of the administrative and managerial problems that INSTRAW has experienced in the past as identified in various assessments reports (see INSTRAW/BT/1999/R.3) and in the light of the proposal of the Board that INSTRAW strengthen its relationship with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Commission on the Status of Women, the Board proposes that the terms of authority between United Nations Headquarters and the Institute be re-examined to find administrative procedures that, while maintaining accountability of all instances responsible for the management of the Institute, can allow the necessary flexibility for the Institute to carry out its mandate.

G. Addressing the financial crisis

23. The above proposed measures to revitalize INSTRAW will not succeed unless the financial crisis is solved. This means addressing the immediate problem of funding to enable the Institute to prepare a programme budget for 2000–2001 and its longer-term financial stability. Given the vulnerability of the Institute's funding modality, the Board would like the Council to consider recommending that a subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations be provided to INSTRAW for the forthcoming year and whenever necessary to cover the costs of the core professional staff of the Institute, including the post of the Director.

24. The Board would also like to urge member States to reinstate their financial support to the Institute for its programmes, and to consider in due time the establishment of a reserve fund in order to ensure longer-term planning and sustainability of the Institute's operations. In this respect, in addition to participating at the 1999 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, INSTRAW will seek the necessary support to organize and invite Member States and other organizations to a donors' meeting in the remaining part of the year. The purpose of this meeting would be to discuss INSTRAW's revitalization strategy and secure the financial support required for its implementation.

25. In addition to the efforts to increase the contributions to INSTRAW's Trust Fund, the Institute will prepare proposals for earmarked contributions from member States and other funding sources for specific projects. For this purpose, the Institute will identify the means of systematically undertaking fund-raising activities. Efforts

will also be made to increase collaboration arrangements with other United Nations entities for funding of specific research and training programmes that they require.

IV. Concluding remarks

26. The Board is confident that the proposed measures will be given due consideration by the Council, and that member States will reinstate their political and financial support to revitalize INSTRAW.

27. The Board would like to suggest that the Council request the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations bodies to analyse the viability of the proposed measures to revitalize the Institute and secure its financial sustainability.

28. While the proposed measures contemplate certain institutional reforms, these do not impinge on the Institute's autonomous and independent nature, which the Board maintains are essential for carrying out its mandate for basic research and training.